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Real-Time Information Even More Critical for Telecom Decision-Makers

Industry Must Explore New Ways to Become More Responsive to Its Customers, According to Progress Software

BEDFORD, MA -- (MARKET WIRE) -- 05/25/11 -- Progress Software Corporation (NASDAQ: PRGS), a leading software provider that enables enterprises to be operationally responsive and improve their customers' experience, has released research revealing that while the telecommunications industry recognizes the value of real-time information, there is some way to go before it can become fully responsive to customer demands. The global study was carried out by independent market research firm, Vanson Bourne, across 107 senior IT decision makers in Telecommunication companies from 10 different countries. The research found that despite 95 per cent of respondents who believe that reacting to events in real-time is important, only 18 per cent claim that they always have adequate visibility into the processes that their business uses to function effectively. As a result, only 16 per cent of respondents said that business processes always keep pace with changes in the business.

Nine out of every ten respondents admitted that the current levels of visibility they have across their core order management systems are less than substantial. Furthermore, 78 per cent of decision makers claim the visibility they have into provisioning processes across bundled service offers is less than excellent. In addition, only a third of telecoms providers say they have systems that always alert them when orders fall out. This inadequacy is costing companies a significant amount of money, with respondents stating on average about eight and half per cent of their yearly IT budget is set aside to deal with order fallout and exceptions. It is evident that this is a costly area to neglect with the high cost of investment of workers being maintained to fix the issues and the immense risk of customer churn due to this unfavourable experience.

Also, while other findings showed that half of respondents said that their organization has tools in place to understand how effectively processes are functioning, it is evident that they are not meeting the needs of managers, with just three per cent claiming that their staff is updated on key performance indicators in real-time. This lack of visibility into how their operations are running can drive operational costs up because inefficiencies are hidden and increase customer churn because customers are unknowingly being negatively impacted.

Sanjay Kumar, industry vice president of Communications and Media, Progress Software, commented: "As products in the industry have become more homogeneous, the services offered are no longer a competitive advantage. In addition, events such as number portability have resulted in the service providers having even less 'stickiness' to retain their customers. What the industry needs are tools that help them redefine excellence in customer service."

The key differentiator for Communications Service Providers (CSP) today is the level of overall customer experience delivered that builds a loyal and long-term customer base. Key factors that hurt the overall customer experience relate to issues that arise, which service providers are not aware of and therefore cannot respond to. Whether it is order fall out in the fulfilment stream, service interruption from the service assurance stream or lack of ticketing response to these problems, siloed organizations and systems have made it difficult to have that end-to-end visibility. CSPs know these issues exist and a tremendous amount of their budget is allocated to fixing issues before it even happens.

In addition to improving back office capabilities to be more responsive, real time information can also increase revenue by offering innovative and personalized offerings at the speed of what the market demands. 78 per cent of the respondents stated that it is important to launch or modify new product offerings quickly to market to stay competitive.

Kumar added: "Communication Service Providers need to provide customers with unique, interactive experiences to build stronger loyalty such as tapping into customer call patterns correlated with customer preferences to provide value added services to customize each customer's experience in a unique and intimate way. Offering services such as real time situation based marketing has been proven to increase their ARPU but more importantly it will strengthen their long term relationship with their customers."

Progress Software empowers communications service providers to enhance the overall experience of their customers in a way that traditional B/OSS solutions cannot by providing them with highly adaptable, quick-to-implement solution that best leverages their existing B/OSS assets. Many of the world's leading communication companies use Progress communications solutions, including Belgacom, Level3, Qwest, Alcatel-Lucent, China Mobile, Verizon, Frontier Communications, H3G - 3

Italia, Huawei, Sprint, Portugal Telecom, Orange UK, One Tel HK, Cablevision, Telecom Italia, and many more.

About Progress Software Corporation
Progress Software Corporation (NASDAQ: PRGS) provides application infrastructure software for the development, deployment, integration and management of business applications. Our goal is to maximize the benefits of information technology while minimizing its complexity and total cost of ownership. Progress can be reached at www.progress.com or +1-781-280-4000.

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